

THE INSTITUTE FOR PERSONAL FINANCE (IPF)

An Educational Service of the

Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education (AFCPE)

DANTES Test Centers' Authorization

The Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education (AFCPE) authorizes military installations with DANTES test centers to administer its basic Institute for Personal Finance (IPF) certification examination.

Background

The AFCPE is a non-profit professional organization formed by a group of financial counseling educators and practitioners to promote the education, training, and professionalism of financial counselors.

One of its objectives is to promote the education and training of the professional in financial management. Membership has grown steadily among military counselors, employee assistance program providers, financial counselors, private practitioners, and educators. Some of its purposes are to:

Number	Purpose
1	Enhance the knowledge, skills, and professionalism of financial counselors.
2	Offer courses of study that strengthen the education and training of financial counselors.
3	Establish criteria that candidates for the IPF designation must satisfy.
4	Develop examinations designed to evaluate the competencies of Institute for Personal Finance Counselors.
5	Develop a Code of Ethics to which all must subscribe.
6	Establish procedures for revoking the Institute for Personal Finance designation.
7	Maintain a directory of accredited personal finance counselors.
8	Require each IPF counselor to earn 11 hours of continuing education credits each year.
9	Develop a program for approving education sponsors who wish to offer their programs to IPF.

Description

IPF Certification Examinations

AFCPE accomplishes its objective of promoting the education and training of the professional in financial management through IPF. IPF administers three certification examinations:

- Accredited Financial Counselor (AFC)
 - Accredited Housing Counselor (AHC)
 - Certified Housing Counselor (CHC)
-

What is an Accredited Financial Counselor (AFC)?

An AFC has certified skills to assist individuals and families in the complex process of financial decision making including the ability to:

- Educate clients in sound financial principles.
 - Assist clients in the process of overcoming their financial indebtedness
 - Help clients identify and modify ineffective money management behaviors
 - Guide clients in developing successful strategies for achieving their financial goals.
 - Support clients as they work through their financial challenges.
 - Help clients develop new perspectives on the dynamics of money in relation to family, friends, and self-esteem.
-

AFC Examination

The AFC curriculum consists of two parts:

- Personal Finance which includes in-depth analyses of financial management principles and strategies. The course focuses on developing a full understanding of the mechanics and techniques of personal financial management.
- Financial Counseling which examines the components of financial counseling including counseling, budgeting, debt reduction, collection policies and practices, bankruptcy, and government assistance programs.

These two parts focus on the development of one's full understanding of the mechanics, techniques, and strategies of personal financial management. Candidates gain greater insight about the appropriate processes of personal and family financial management.

Each examination includes 100 multiple choice questions and takes approximately two hours to complete. A candidate must correctly answer a minimum of 70 questions to earn a passing grade on each examination.

How to Obtain an Application for the IPF Certification Examination

Applications

To obtain an application for the IPF certification examination, follow these steps:

Step	Action
1	<p>Either the applicant or DANTES Test Control Officer (TCO) forwards a written request to:</p> <p>Institute for Personal Finance (IPF) 2121 Arlington Ave #5 Upper Arlington, OH 43221</p> <p>Phone: (614) 485-9620/9650 Fax: (614) 485-9621</p> <p>We recommend you call to confirm receipt of faxed orders.</p>
2	<p>On the application in the space marked “Employed by,” have military applicants provide their branch of service and rank/rate/rating, as appropriate.</p> <p>The IPF application also provides space for personal, education, and work experience information.</p>
3	<p>The TCO forwards applications to the National Registry (IPF Program) accompanied by a letter on official stationery.</p>

Allow 4 Weeks

ALLOW AT LEAST 4 WEEKS FOR PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS AND FORWARDING OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS.

Becoming an Accredited Financial Counselor (AFC)

Requirements	<p>To become an AFC, candidates must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earn a passing grade on each course examination.• Subscribe to the AFC Code of Ethics• Submit three letters of reference attesting to professional competence; at least one must be from a client and at least one must be from a fellow professional.• Have 2 years of admissible financial counseling experience.
---------------------	---

Program Materials and Assistance

Necessary Materials/ Assistance	<p>Contact IPF either by mail or phone for necessary materials or questions regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant qualifications• Education/training requirements, and• Any other matters related to the IPF program.
AFCPE Association Membership	<p>IPF candidates who join The Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education will receive the quarterly bulletin, <i>AFCPE Newsletter</i> and the annual journal, <i>FINANCIAL COUNSELING</i>.</p>

Certification Criteria

Certification Criteria	<p>Anyone with financial counseling responsibilities is eligible for IPF certification.</p>
-------------------------------	---

Certification Fees

Certification Fees

The following chart indicates the fees for the IPF certification program:

IPF Area	*Military Fee	Civilian Fee
Registration	\$ 30	\$ 40
Course 1: Study Materials	\$125	\$225
Examination 1	\$ 60	\$225
Course 2: Study Materials	\$125	\$225
Examination 2	\$ 60	\$225

***These fees only apply to military branches of service that have active contract agreements with IPF. Currently, Navy has an active contract.**

Forms of Payment

Make the registration (certification) fee payable to the Institute for Personal Finance in the form of a:

- Money order (preferred)
 - Check, or
 - Government-regulated training payment form (such as DD Form 1556).
-

Administration

When TCOs Should Administer

DANTES TEST CENTERS MAY ADMINISTER THE IPF EXAMINATION TO ELIGIBLE ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY AND RESERVE COMPONENT PERSONNEL ON AN UNFUNDED (EXAMINEE PAYS) BASIS UNLESS EXISTING MILITARY REGULATIONS PROVIDE OTHERWISE.

Continued on next page

Administration, Continued

Civilian Administration

DANTES test centers may administer the IPF examination to the following civilians on **AN UNFUNDED (EXAMINEE PAYS) AND SPACE-AVAILABLE BASIS** according to local command policy and Service regulations:

- Retired military personnel
 - Military family members
 - Veterans, and
 - U.S. federal employees
-

Scoring

Scoring

Immediately after testing, forward the completed examinations and related materials to:

Institute for Personal Finance (IPF)
2121 Arlington Ave #5
Upper Arlington, OH 43221

Refunds

Refunds

All IPF certification examination fees **are not** refundable.

Retesting

Retesting

Examinees who earn lower than 70 percent on any IPF examination may apply for subsequent examinations by paying another fee and meeting the current registration requirements.

Registration fees are good for 3 years. If examinations are not completed within 3 years, a new registration fee is required.

Certificate Maintenance

Certificate Maintenance

Each IPF designee is required to earn 30 hours of continuing education units every 2 years. Such education programming must be pre-approved by IPF.

Problems

Problems

Contact IPF immediately if you experience any problems involving receipt of

- Applications
- Descriptive information
- Examinations
- Examination scores, and/or
- Certificates not being received in a timely manner.

Security

Test Loss or Compromise

Refer to Part I of the *DANTES Examination Program Handbook (DEPH)* for complete instructions if there is an IPF test loss or compromise.

Contact DANTES immediately and refer to specific Service regulations for complete procedures. DANTES address is:

**DANTES
Code 20F
6490 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32509-5243**

**Phone: (850) 452-1360
DSN: 922-1360
Fax: (850) 452-1161**

Web Pages and E-Mail Address

**DANTES Web
Address**

Access the DANTES web pages at <http://www.dantes.doded.mil>.

**IPF Web
Address**

Access the IPF web page at www.afcpe.org.

**DANTES E-
Mail Address**

The DANTES Certification Programs E-mail address is
certprog@voled.doded.mil.
